

**CHARLIE BAKER**  
*Governor*



**KARYN POLITO**  
*Lt. Governor*

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**Governor Baker Proclaims March as Intellectual and Developmental  
Disabilities Awareness Month**



For high-resolution and more photos, click [here](#).

**BOSTON** — Today, Governor Charlie Baker and Secretary of Health and Human Services Marylou Sudders joined The Arc of Massachusetts and the Massachusetts Developmental Disabilities Council at their Annual Legislative Reception where the Governor declared March as Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month in honor of 40 years of success serving individuals with disabilities and their families.

“For the first time in nearly 30 years, our Administration was proud to fully invest in critical programs, like Turning 22, to help people in Massachusetts living with disabilities receive an education, get a job, live independently and have access to critical services. This year’s budget proposal adds even more money to these programs, and if approved, could help over 1,000 individuals,” **said Governor Charlie Baker.** “We remain committed to making Massachusetts a leader in providing services and accessibility for youth and adults with developmental disabilities.”

The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) provides critical services for more than 39,000 individuals in the Commonwealth and has focused on providing real employment opportunities for people with disabilities and increasing individuals’ self-sufficiency to produce positive results.

Chapter 688 of the Acts of 1983 (the “Turning 22” law) serves as a critical bridge from educational support services into the adult human services program. The law provides for a two year transitional process for young adults who will lose their connection to special education upon graduation or reaching the age of 22.

In Fiscal Year 2018, the Baker-Polito Administration led efforts to fully fund the Turning 22 program at \$23.1 million for the first time in nearly 30 years. The Administration’s Fiscal Year 2019 budget funds Turning 22 at \$25 million, an increase of almost \$2 million over the FY18 appropriation, to continue fully-funding the program and meeting the needs of a class that is growing in size.

“We continue to work closely with The Arc, the Legislature and other community leaders to support individuals with disabilities and their loved ones,” **said Secretary of Health and Human Services Marylou Sudders.** “We are committed to promoting a better quality of life for the individuals we serve and their families.”

DDS anticipates serving over 1,100 individuals in FY19’s Turning 22 class, many of whom have complex medical and behavioral needs and will require residential placement.

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